
NEWS From:

Congressman Mike Honda

FIFTEENTH DISTRICT - CALIFORNIA



For Immediate Release
March 5, 2001

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Honda Joins with Educators, Industry Leaders to Launch "NET Corps" Legislation

Campbell, CA— Today U.S. Congressman Mike Honda (D-San Jose) joined with high- tech industry leaders and educators from the South Bay to announce the launch of his "National Education Technology Corps Act of 2001" (NET Corps) that he is introducing in the United States Congress this week. In the spirit of the Peace Corps and AmeriCorps, the NET Corps will recruit part-time and full-time volunteers from high-tech companies to provide support and training to school network administrators and teachers in return for tax credits from the federal government.

"NET Corps will work to improve the quality of classroom education for our children by coupling the specific needs of our school systems with the energy and intellect of some the high-tech industry's brightest people," said Honda. **"I believe that NET Corps is an excellent model for improving the capabilities of our schools because it creates incentives for the private sector to become more involved in education while affording high-tech workers the opportunity to make a positive change in their own community."**

"NET Corps Act recognizes the importance of integrating technology into our nation's classrooms in a manner that effectively supports education goals," said Jeff Modisett, Vice President and General Counsel of TechNet of Silicon Valley. **"Honda's legislation further recognizes that professional development for teachers is also essential to achieving this goal. NET Corps would encourage school partnerships with industry and with our nation's universities— both of which can be an effective tool to improve our schools."**

"As an educator, I strongly support Mike Honda's NET Corps proposal because it allows local school administrators and teachers to design plans suited to their own needs and provides significant training opportunities for our teachers," said Leon Beauchman, Vice President of the Santa Clara County School Board. **"This program will significantly help school districts meet the next generation of technology needs for their students and will foster a cooperative working relationship between private sector volunteers and teachers."**

"This is exactly the type of innovative proposal that is needed to continue the efforts of lawmakers and the high tech community to create digital opportunity in underserved areas, said Robert Holleyman, President of Business Software Alliance. **This model legislation will build on efforts to continue to educate America's future high tech workforce. This type of thinking is synonymous with the area that Congressman Honda represents— Silicon Valley."**

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“NET Corps will do much to encourage high tech companies to create opportunities for their employees to volunteer to work with students, teachers to improve our schools,” said Bob Pearlman, Director of Education and Workforce Development for Joint Venture of Silicon Valley. “This is critical to addressing the Digital Divide in Silicon Valley and across the nation.”

The United States Department of Education will assist NET Corps to ensure that volunteer activities are consistent with the most effective means of classroom instruction. Schools that want to receive NET Corps assistance must submit a technology plan outlining the goals for education technology.

NET Corps volunteers will also be recruited from undergraduate and graduate programs at our nation’s universities and from the AmeriCorps program. All volunteers must possess a minimum level expertise that will be determined by the Corporation for National Service.

To encourage participation in the program, the federal government will offer a 20% tax credit to private corporations that lend their employees to the NET Corps program. Corporations who take advantage of this tax credit can claim no more than \$25,000 per employee.

The inspiration for this bill stems from various facets of Honda’s personal life. Prior to his election to Congress last year, Mr. Honda served in the Peace Corps in El Salvador from 1965-1967 and as a high school science teacher and principal in the San Jose area. It is fitting that the NET Corps program is the first piece of legislation offered by Mr. Honda in the United States Congress as it combines his passion for education, his dedication to the spirit of volunteerism and the resources of his Silicon Valley District to improve the lives of young people.